

Biggest evening sale in the world

Evening News

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5p

Wanderers present the TIE to remember

WYCOMBE v MIDDLESBROUGH



By JOHN OAKLEY

JOHN MASKELL, long-serving Wycombe Wanderers goalkeeper, admits to being superstitious.

So before playing against First Division Middlesbrough at Loakes Park in the F.A. Cup third round he was going through his usual double act for Cup-tie days.

That involved wearing his navy blue Berks and Bucks county tie.

Then he was planning to be second man in line when skipper Alan Phillips led the Wycombe Wanderers on to the pitch.

"I'm not sure why I do these things," admitted Big John. "But I'm sure I would play badly if I forgot. I like getting on to the pitch as early as possible to shake off any pre-match nerves."

Maskell, now 31, is in his 12th season with the Wanderers and agrees that FA Cup ties are just that bit special.

I think all clubs like ours like to have a tilt at the big boys.

I think Middlesbrough are about the last team I wanted us to meet.

Some of the bigger clubs tend to mess about a little when they meet amateur or non-League club.

They try to take the mickey instead of getting on with winning the game.

But Middlesbrough are not like that. They don't appear to have any stars. But when I have seen them on the box they all work like mad for each other.

HARDEST

That is the hardest type of team to beat and if we are realistic we don't have too much chance.

I know we have a sloping pitch which confuses many teams at first but Middlesbrough should be too long in the tooth to be confused for long.

But don't think I'm too pessimistic. I know a lot of things can happen in a Cup-tie. If Hendon can draw at Newcastle — remember last season? — then we have an outside chance. "I guess I'm in the hot seat. Make a mistake and it's curtains, but I'm looking forward to this match.

These sort of occasions can really lift teams like ours and I know that all the lads will be giving everything."



ALAN PHILLIPS
He leads out Wycombe — followed immediately by John Maskell.



Yes, it's a "tie" to remember for Wycombe goalkeeper John Maskell and he forecasts that Middlesbrough won't be able to forget it for years and years. Maskell, in his 12th season with The Happy Wanderers, says the occasion is going to lift them.

Big Jack tells his lads 'Don't worry'



JIM PLATT, facing Wycombe.

MIDDLESBROUGH fans rate Jim Pratt the best uncapped goalkeeper in the First Division.

"And I'm not arguing with that opinion," says Middlesbrough manager Jack Charlton.

Big Jack believes Irishman Platt will win over the impartial, plus a few of the fervent Loakes Park regulars, this afternoon.

Charlton's pre-match pep talk will include a warning to his team: "Don't you worry about the slope—and let Jim be boss in the goal area."

Jack admits that he is doing the worrying and planning for his players on how to combat the notorious Loakes Park pitch with its 10 feet drop.

The slope is from touchline to touchline and different from the Yeovil gradient where many First Division teams have met their Cup doom.

Charlton knows plenty about cup-fighting, having been centre half in England's team that won the world cup in 1966.



JACKIE CHARLTON, Middlesbrough manager

Why you must get tonight's Classified News

IT'S Cup Bonanza day with the First and Second Division clubs coming into the FA Cup—and it's Bonanza Night in Sport-News.

All the thrills—and spills—will be captured in words and pictures.

Leading the Sport-News team is VICTOR RAILTON. He travels with QUEEN'S PARK RANGERS for their intriguing match at SOUTHEND.

ORIENT, slipping in the league, promise big things in the Cup, starting with the visit of DERBY COUNTY.

JIM GAUGHAN will be at Brisbane Road to spotlight Orient's giant-killing bid.

PLUS big coverage of WYCOMBE v MIDDLESBROUGH, ARSENAL v YORK, CHELSEA v SHEFFIELD, WEDNESDAY, FULHAM v HULL, SOUTHAMPTON v WEST HAM, NOTTINGHAM FOREST v SPURS, BURY v MILLWALL, LUTON v BIRMINGHAM, BRIGHTON v LEATHERHEAD and BURNLEY v WIMBLEDON.

SportNews will also take in the League matches, CRYSTAL PALACE v HEREFORD, CHARLTON v WREXHAM, CREWE v READING, WATFORD v GRIMSBY plus NORTHAMPTON v BRENTFORD.

Wycombe's big Cup day

**We don't
need
to slope
arms**

WYCOMBE manager Brian Lee demonstrates to his happy players (right) that the battle against Middlesbrough is very much "on the level."

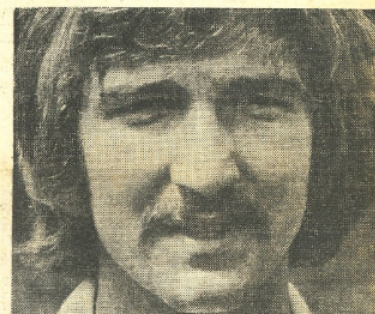
Lee, a director of the Bisham Abbey national recreation centre and a J.P., claims that Wycombe's sloping pitch is neither a big secret help to them nor a huge handicap to the opposition.

True, in the days of more orthodox touchline-hugging wingers, the Wanderers made shrewd use of the "hill" in front of the stand. Judging the pace and distance of the ball was a subtle art. But these days Wycombe rely on all-round ability and thoughtful play with intelligent build-up.

This has taken them through on merit—as Newport County (last season) and Bournemouth will confirm. Lookes Park is set on a hillside but Lee's lion-hearts don't need to slope arms.



DANGER! Goal men at their work



GRAHAM SOUNESS, the ex-Spurs player, who is currently starring for Middlesbrough.



TONY HORSEMAN



STEVE PERRIN



ALAN FOGGON, the Middlesbrough midfielder who has regained form after losing weight.